

1859

1858 Paris Maine School Superintendent Report

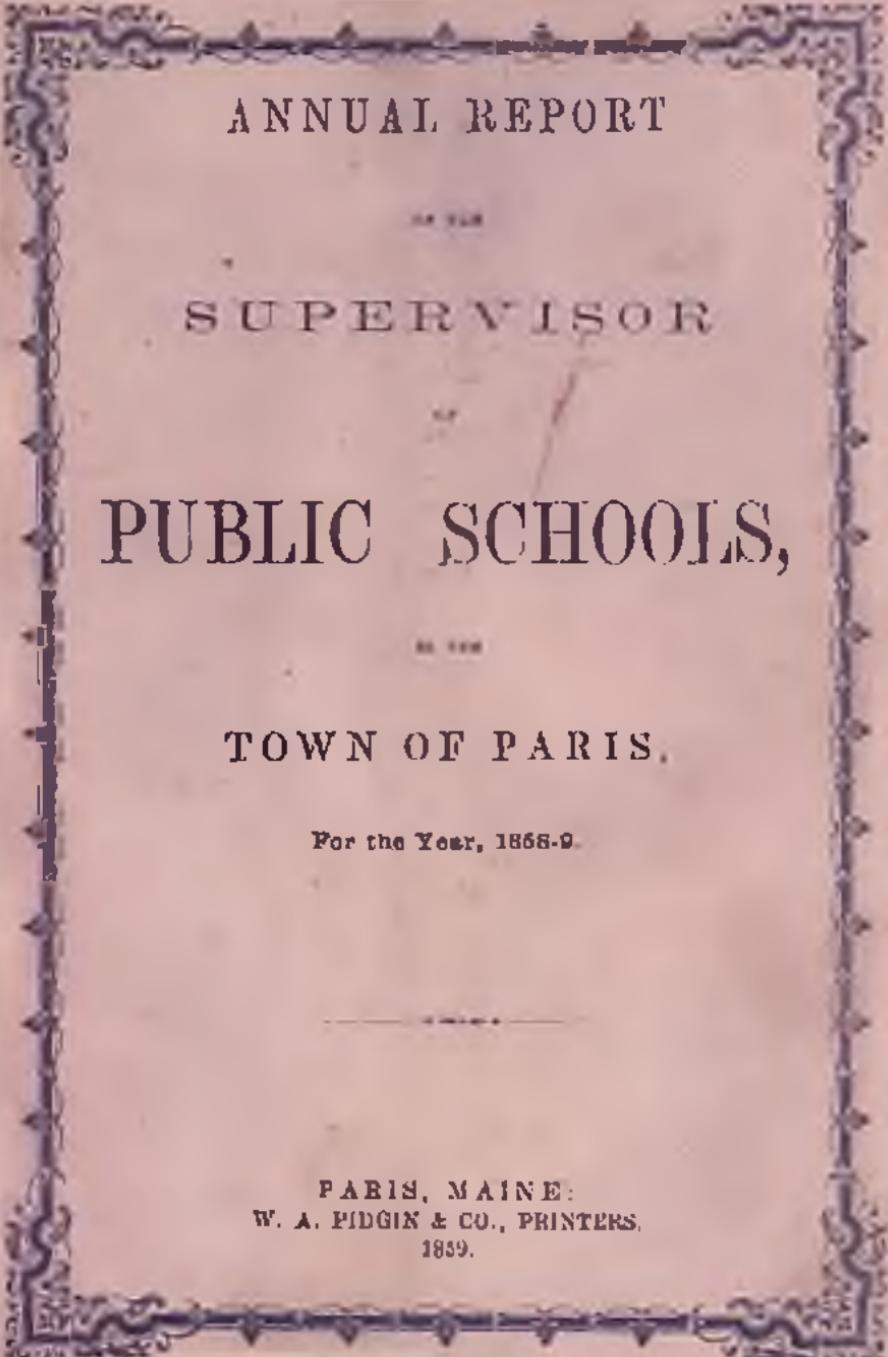
Municipal Officers of Paris Maine

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ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
SUPERVISOR
OF THE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS,
IN THE
TOWN OF PARIS.

For the Year, 1858-9.

PARIS, MAINE:
W. A. PIDGIN & CO., PRINTERS,
1859.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SCHOOL SUPERVISOR

OF THE TOWN OF PARIS,—1858-9.

Fellow Citizens:

The experiment of reducing the Superintending School Committee to a unit, has been tried in this town for the first time, during the past year.

The advantage ~~for~~ disadvantage of this change, is not my province to determine. I will only say, that, while I have missed the co-operation and counsel of those that shared the duties of last year, my associations with teachers and scholars have been very pleasant, and the courtesy and good feeling generally manifested, truly gratifying. There are less that ~~lost~~ the expression, "better stay at home."

As to the manner of performing the duties devolving upon me, I will say but a word. If your humble servant has manifested any tolerable degree of skill or efficiency at the plow or bench, the fact furnishes but slender assurance of success at a post that has been long and honorably filled, in this town. Therefore in consideration of this circumstance, there may be a justice in claiming some immunity from criticism.

In endeavoring to answer the lowest requirements of the law, seventy visitations to the schools have been made, which, though less than the ordinary aggregate, has been a large increase of individual labor.

There have been forty-three schools in town the past year. Three of these were of short duration, owing to sickness, and other causes. The limited time allowed for their supervision, admits small premises by which to determine their merits and demerits.

In the annual reports thus far published, the School Commit-

REPORT OF THE

tea have expressed somewhat in detail, their opinions of schools and teachers severally. This is a task of some delicacy, especially in a community where there is a favoritism for this or that method of government or instruction, for this or that teacher as the embodiment of perfection, and when there are such various views and prejudices on all subjects connected with education. In view of these facts different persons would impute the same results to different causes. I have not the vanity to suppose for a moment that I shall be able to hold the scales of justice evenly, on all matters connected with our schools, having but limited knowledge of the circumstances; or to be able to measure out as large a share of commendation in every quarter, as interested friends may desire. Admitting all this, yet it has been deemed advisable to bring before the citizens of the town, in printed form, the relative standing of the several schools, with some additional statistics, that would the better give prominence to the best schools, and which might in future incite a laudable emulation by inducing others to "do likewise." And if the failings of some schools are made conspicuous, it is only that they may appear as rocks and shoals to be avoided. Besides, figures tell their own story. Believing that the better our schools are known the better our school system is understood, the more intelligent and efficient will be all action designed to benefit them, and promote their usefulness. That our schools do not do all the good they might and ought, no one will deny; although they may compare favorably with schools of adjoining towns. Is it not true that a large majority of the graduates of our schools, are deficient of a common school education,—a business education? How many when they leave our schools, should they be called upon to give a receipt, would succeed better than a certain teacher, who wrote, "I have got the money."

A sound, practical education is the birthright of every child in the community; and it is a lamentable fact that there are any of ordinary capacity, that should leave our schools destitute of such an education; yet if *big boys* and *small young men*

choose to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage, the blame cannot be wholly attributed to the schools. It is not so much to be wondered at, that there are many that are determined to follow their own bent, whithersoever it lead, when facts are at hand to show, that there are parents, who, too often in their families "allow the natural order of things to be inverted,—who render, instead of exacting obedience, who train up a child in the way he *chooses* to go, allowing him to be a law to himself, and a reproach to those."

It is particularly noticeable, that Arithmetic is made a prominent study in our school exercises; this is not strange, when we find it a favorite branch with a large majority of teachers and scholars. It is also noticeable that there is a corresponding neglect of other branches of no minor importance. It would be a difficult task, especially in a community where there is such a diversity of opinion, to draw the line between those that should not be used, and give due prominence to the most essential. No one will claim that the whole range of science can be successfully pursued in our common schools. One may claim that Physiology is an all-important subject,—that we should understand the structure of the human body, and the laws of health; the observance of which, is in general, a condition of longevity, not to say of exemption from disease. Another will say that Moral Philosophy is sadly neglected; that the moral nature of the child should be cultivated, as well as the other powers of the mind; that the "golden rule" is of more importance than the "rule of three." Others might contend that Vocal Music is very desirable, as it promotes good reading and speaking, by disciplining the ear to distinguish sounds. It also facilitates the cultivation of the finer feelings of our nature.

The practical branches, those that we carry into every day life, may and ought to take precedence. Admitting this, it follows that Book Keeping is of no small importance, combining as it does two distinct branches, Penmanship and Arithmetic. Is not this a study, which, in practical life, comes home to the interest, not only of every merchant, but of every farmer, every

mechanic, in short, every business man; yet it is true that it is almost entirely neglected in our schools. "Some still keep their accounts on bits of paper; others use books, but without any system, order or intelligibility; and others still mark their scores in chalk or charcoal upon the panel of the cellar door." This may be better than no record of business transactions, yet in case of litigation, a panel door is not a very portable accounting book to carry into court.

But there are other lessons to be learned at school beside those learned from books,—lessons of "correct deportment, self-reliance, self-restraint, self-respect;" something of neatness, cleanliness of person and dress, something of "certain inalienable rights," can and ought to be inculcated here, together with certain requirements of law, namely, "the principles of morality and justice, and a sacred regard for truth; love of country, humanity, and a universal benevolence; sobriety, industry, and frugality; chastity, moderation, and temperance; and all other virtues, which are the ornaments of human society; a particular understanding of the tendency of such virtues to preserve and perfect a republican constitution, and secure the blessings of liberty, and promote their future happiness; and the tendency of the opposite vices, to slavery, degradation and ruin."

And last, but not least, in our school economy, is *punctuality*. This subject was treated at some length in the last annual report, and can there be too much importance attached to it? Every business man knows full well how much depends upon punctuality; so does everyone conversant with school exercises. Constant and seasonable attendance is the life of the school, other things being equal. There is a manifest improvement in parts of the town, yet tardiness is a crying evil in many schools, and we would keep this subject before the citizens of Paris as long, if necessary, as did J. Q. Adams the right of petition, before Congress. Those schools where the attendance has been most prompt and regular, have been most successful. An examination of the tables furnished by several of the teach-

em, of their schools, shows that the greatest amount of tardiness is among those scholars that have the easiest access to the school. Those parents that live the farthest from the school-house, take the most pains to get their children to school.

If punctuality is not learned in our schooldays, have we any reason to believe that it will ever be learned. Says Charles Northend, if children are allowed to be tardy in their attendance at school, they will be prone to undervalue it in other affairs; and is it not extremely desirable that the minds of children should be impressed with the fact, that whatever is worth doing at all, should be done well, and at the proper time. Northend also remarks that children who enter the schoolroom at late hours, interrupt the order of the school, and interfere with some passing exercise, in which perhaps they should take a part. Thus a whole school is made to suffer for the deviation of a few. In some schools much time is actually lost by the dilatoriness of individual members."

One fact from history. A great battle was going on. Columns after columns had been precipitated, for eight mortal hours, on the enemy, posted along the ridge of a hill. The summer sun was sinking to the West; re-enforcements for the obstinate defenders were already in sight; it was necessary to carry the position with one final charge, or everything would be lost. A powerful corps had been summoned across the country, and if it came up in season all would yet be right. The great conqueror, confident in its arrival, formed his reserve into an attacking column, and led them down the hill. The whole world knows the result. Grouchy failed to appear; the Imperial Guard was beaten back; Waterloo was lost. Napoleon died a prisoner at St. Helena because one of his Marshals was *behind time*. It is continually so in life. The best laid plans, says Freeman Hunt, the most important affairs, the fortunes of individuals, the weal of nations, honor, happiness, life itself are daily sacrificed, because somebody is "*behind time*." There are men who always fail in whatever they undertake, simply because they are "*behind time*." If there is one virtue that

should be cultivated more than another, by him who would succeed in life, it is punctuality; if there is one error to be avoided, it is being *behind time*.

It may be of interest, and also serve to enable us to appreciate our school privileges, to contrast our own State and its Free Schools, with Virginia, a State richer in natural resources, —honored as the “mother of Presidents,” yet having no operative common school system. Our own State, less favored than the Old Dominion, in all the elements of natural thrift, but only more blessed in being more generally intelligent.

Now if we will turn to the census of 1850, we find over 75,000 *native* white adults in Virginia, unable to read and write; or one to 12 nearly, of the white population. In Maine, we find a little over 2000 *native* adults, unable to read and write; or 1 to 260, nearly; or 1 to 93 of the whole population.

Here we have data from which we may judge of the general diffusion of intelligence in the two sections of country. Here we find unmistakable evidence of the effects of Free Schools, on the one hand, and their exclusion on the other.

The popular sentiment of Maine and all New England sustains her Free Schools. The popular sentiment of Virginia and her sister States, is opposed to a general diffusion of intelligence.

Now let us contrast the popular sentiment of the two sections of country, the effects of which we believe are seen in the statistics given above. In 1842, Gov. Hammond of South Carolina wrote thus, “The Free School system has failed, owing to the fact that it does not suit our people or our government; and it never can be remedied. It is contrary to the principles of our institutions to apply it here, and the Free School system is a failure.”

Gov. Wise of Virginia has the reputation of being opposed to any public school system, as “tending to the demoralization of the community, by its *herding influences*.”

In equally strong language, but with a more classic ring, are the following lines from Daniel Webster:

“Among the planets in the sky of New England,—the burn-

ing lights which throw intelligence and happiness on the people!—the first and most brilliant is her system of Common Schools. Education, to accomplish the ends of good government should be universally diffused. Open the door of the school house to all the children in the land! Let no man have the excuse of poverty for not educating his offspring! Place the means of education within his reach, and if he remains in ignorance, be it his own reproach! On the diffusion of education among the people, rests the preservation and perpetuation of our free institutions."

If we find the leading sentiment of a section of country followed by such sure results for good or evil, then there is a manifest propriety in believing that the leading sentiment of a smaller community,—a school district—will either give efficiency to the school within its limits or detract much, very much from its usefulness. "Right Parental feeling and co-operation will give our schools an impulse that *nothing else can impart*."

Our School Agents, generally, have looked well to the interest of their schools, and have employed able and efficient teachers. Our table of statistics will show that some of our teachers have labored for decidedly small pay. It is true that we have had some excellent schools for small pay, but they must be considered exceptions to the general rule. In such cases it is evident that teachers have been more desirous of establishing a reputation, and made money a secondary object. If poor schools can be compared with good ones, most districts have received their money's worth. There may be such a thing as going to extremes, in employing teachers, yet *it is the soundest economy to provide the very best instructors of youth we can obtain, at whatever cost*. One term of school properly improved will be of more lasting benefit to a pupil, than would ten terms without the right guidance and interest. There is no surer way of bringing the whole business of education into contempt, than by employing year after year, poor teachers, simply because they can be obtained with little trouble, and at a low price. The time of youth is too precious to be thus trifled with. "Who would think of sending a costly gold watch to a bungling blacksmith for repairing? No more put the immortal minds of

your children under the tinkering of one, who does not understand their natures and necessities, and who has no true idea of his avowed calling."

It is believed that our schools for the past year, with some exceptions, have been highly successful. An increased interest which has been manifesting itself in quite extensive school-house repairs in several districts in town, is now beginning to be felt in their several schools. An unusual amount of sickness in many districts has lowered the average attendance considerably, and it is mainly to be attributed to this cause that the table of statistics does not average higher than last year. As a whole, our schools have never been in a more prosperous condition.

Our best Summer Schools have been found in Nos. 2, Grammar, and Intermediate—9, Upper department—10, and 17. These appear to possess nearly equal merits. Thorough and wholesome government was well maintained in each of these schools throughout the term. A good degree of interest was manifested, and the progress in the several branches very commendable. The closing examination exhibited a feature of thoroughness which reflected much credit. The Old School House in No. 10, was removed before the commencement of the summer term, and propped up so as to answer to "keep school" in. It did answer, and its well swept floors evinced a degree of neatness truly praiseworthy. The well worn floors in Nos. 2 and 17, were well cared for and reflected much credit; and I would say in this connection that none of our summer schools appeared wanting in this virtue.

The second grade of summer terms comprises Nos. 5, 7, 8, 12, 16, 16 and 18. These were quite successful, and it is believed gave general satisfaction. The teachers of nearly all these schools were young and inexperienced, yet they manifested a will to do their whole duty, thus verifying the old maxim, that "where there's a will, there's a way." The respect and esteem of pupils were generally secured, and to this, the success of these schools is much to be attributed. The government, however, was very fair, the instruction systematic and thorough as one need expect from inexperienced hands. So

good a beginning promises well for their success. The school in No. 12, hardly sustained the high reputation of its preceding terms. Although the means here to secure good order by suppressing whispering, may not have been the best, yet had they been considered popular and received the sanction of interested parties, it would have given them efficiency, and resulted in the eradication of the great vice of the school-room. If the end ever justified the means, it is believed here is a case in point. Unless the habit has become thoroughly "dyed in the wool," it can be eradicated by the persevering exercise of requisite judgment and skill.

The Primary schools in Nos. 2 and 9 were somewhat deficient in government. It is not to be expected that these Primary schools can be subjected to the same rules and regulations of other schools, yet a certain amount of restraint may be judiciously exercised. If there are any schools where judgment, discretion and experience are needed, it is in the management of these.

The school in No. 3 was not as successful as we anticipated. The progress in the several branches, did not appear commensurate with the abilities of the pupils. The teacher labored hard, and like efforts may be better appreciated in some other school. The absence and tardiness as shown in table 2 in the appendix, indicates a "peg loose" somewhere. In No. 6 the Summer terms were unfortunate ones. The first term continued but two weeks,—the teacher being called home by sickness of friends. The second was a failure in government. The third was tolerably successful, and fair progress was made.

The best Winter schools, those that may well be considered first class schools, have been in Nos. 2,—Grammar and Intermediate,—4, 8, 14 and 16. These terms have been eminently successful. Webster's definition of *discipline* has been very well exemplified here. "Education; instruction; cultivation and improvement; comprehending instruction in *correct sentiments, morals, and manners, and due subordination to authority.*" The graded schools in No. 2 possess many advantages

over surrounding schools. There is not that mixed multitude of lessons, and the teachers are better enabled to secure thorough, systematic instruction, and a full understanding of every subject presented. Everything pertaining to these schools was effectually systematized (basing the old house.) Absence is yet too marked a feature in the registers of these schools.

In No. 4 the school has been deservedly popular. The percentage stands highest of any school in town, and shows conclusively that *somebody* is deserving of praise.

No. 16 is the second on the percentage column, and the progress in the several branches proportionate to the attendance. The requirements of law, that a teacher should possess a "temper and disposition suitable to be an instructor of youth," were fully answered here, and it necessarily follows that the love and obedience of pupils were secured. The table of this school is a truthful representation—*figurative language*—of the interest manifested.

The schools next in order have been in Nos. 9, 10, 12, 17, and 18. Although the progress made in these schools falls but little below that of the first grade, yet there were some points of excellence in the first that seemed wanting here.

In No. 9 the government was hardly what the orderly school in the Academy, by the same teacher, led us to expect. Though above the average, it hardly came up to the first class standard. The higher branches of Mathematics were pursued here. Some classes in Arithmetic and Grammar made commendable progress, alike creditable to teacher and scholars; others, supposing they were not among the favored class, did not put forth the effort they might, and their advancement was somewhat less than what their abilities might warrant. The instruction in this school was considered thorough and analytical.

In No. 10, the government was excelled by no other school in town. "Young America" was completely held in check by the force of a strong will. Whispering could find no acknowledged place, showing that the evil can be eradicated, and that pupils are all the happier for it. This school is now in progress, and is believed to be highly satisfactory to the district. A larger school, as a spur to greater activity, would have called into exercise in a higher degree the acknowledged ability of the teacher. Man has been said to be "a bundle of habits," while none of us are free from objectionable ones, and "happy is the man whose habits are his friends." The marks of a masticated weed were too perceptible on the floor of this room. *Example* is admitted to exert a greater influence than *precept*,

and "may it not be worth while to ask whether there is not some moral delinquency in teaching this practice to the young.

In No. 12 is the largest single school in town. The Grammar department in No. 2 registered a larger number, but the attendance is the same in both. A large proportion is now young, requiring more individual attention than older pupils, as reading and spelling must be the chief exercises. In learning to read, every child must read for himself to receive much benefit, and this takes time. After deducting the usual time for recesses, and dividing by the average attendance, (which is far below what it ought to be,) we find the proportional part for each scholar to be but a fraction over seven minutes per day. This is little time to "pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind." The older pupils have assisted to quite an extent in conducting the recitations of the smaller classes, thus contributing very much to the progress of the school. The advancement of the several classes, though not so marked as some in town, was yet very creditable to the pupils. Were this district to provide an additional school room, for the winter term, it is believed it would soon reap a sure and rich reward.

In No. 17 we find one of the orderly schools of the town. The pupils have generally sustained their good name, and the teacher has shown himself interested, persevering, and faithful.

In 18, the thorough scholarship of the teacher, though young, has rendered the *schols and references* the common property of the school.

There was but one term in No. 1. This was visited but once. It then appeared well, and promised a profitable term.

In No. 3 the school was a failure. Had the scholars of this school done as well as did the teacher, they might have secured to themselves much benefit. And had the teacher possessed the spirit of our State motto, *Dirigo*, all would have been well.

In No. 5 the school commenced under favorable auspices, but order was not sustained throughout the term. Constant reading, and recitation to my mind should be introduced only to break the usual routine, and give life and variety. A school will appear better thus drilled, but the credit should be awarded to the leaders. There was too much of this to be profitable.

In No. 6 the teacher was young and inexperienced, and the school was a partial failure. It is again in operation, under an able and efficient instructor, and there are no doubts as to its success.

REPORT OF THE

A Tabular Statement of the Schools of Paris.

NAME OF TEACHERS.	Number of District.	Number of Scholars between 4 and 11.	Amount of School Money appropriated.	Whole No. Scholars Registered.	Average attendance.		Percentage of attendance.	Wages per month.		Length of School in Weeks.		Whole No. of Weeks.
					Num. of W. M.	Num. of W. M.				Num. of W. M.	Num. of W. M.	
1 Miss Almira Bryant.	1	27	\$60.24	14	12	85	85	\$11	10	13	13	13
2 Mr. Henry O. Taylor.	2	57	\$73.11	45	27	60	68	17	10	12	22	12
Mr. Charles C. Roush.								31				
Miss Horvath Hale.				43	37	86	80	12	12	11	21	12
Mrs. Kate N. Roush.				55	34	61	60	5	12	12	24	12
Miss Anna G. Wing.				50	20	70	78	5	12	8	20	12
Miss Rachelle E. H. Willard.				26	22	84	93	17	7	9	16	12
3 Miss Jeanne L. Shortz.	3	39	\$36.93	26	26	77	77	22	11	11	11	11
Mr. A. D. Bryant.				30	21	77	77	7	11	11	11	11
Miss Sarah J. Marshall.	4	38	\$4.74	26	22	84	93	17	7	9	16	12
Mr. J. H. Morse.				30	21	77	77	7	11	11	11	11
Miss Elizabeth Ryan.	5	14	\$8.10	27	21	77	77	7	11	11	11	11
Mr. Frank Marshall.				30	21	77	77	7	11	11	11	11
6 Miss Sarah J. Smith.	6	70	\$66.10	59	50	86	86	6	2	2	2	2

A Tabular Statement of the Schools of Paris.

Number of District.	NAMES OF TEACHERS. 1858-9.	Number of Scholars between 4 and 21.	Amount of School Money appropriated.	Whole No. Scholars Registered.		Average attendance.		Percentage of attendance.		Wages per month.	Length of School in Weeks.		Whole No. of Weeks.
				Sum'r.	Wint.	Sum'r.	Wint.	Sum'r.	Wint.		Sum'r.	Wint.	
1	Miss Almira Bryant.	27	\$60.21		14		12	.85	\$11		13	13	
2	Mr. Henry O. Thayer.	257	573.11	45		27		.60	17	10			
	Mr. Charles C. Rounds.				70		48	.68	32		12	22	
	Miss Hortense Hale.			43		37		.86	12	12			
	Mrs. Kate N. Rounds.				40		32	.80	12		11	21	
	Miss Anna G. Wing.			55		34		.61	5	12			
	Miss Randilla E. H. Willard.				50		40	.80	12		12	24	
3	Miss Jennie L. Shurtleff.	39	36.97	26		20		.76	5	12			
	Mr. A. D. Bryant.				33		26	.78	17		8	20	
4	Miss Sarah J. Marshall.	38	84.74	26		22		.84	7	7			
	Mr. J. H. Morse.				30		28	.93	22		9	16	
5	Miss Elphreda Swan.	44	98.12	27		21		.77	7	11			
	Mr. Frank Marshall.												
6	Miss Sarah J. Stearns.	70	156.10	58		50		.86	6	2			

*Delia
Payne*

36th St.

Dioco

Peter

W. P. Smith

SCHOOL SUPERVISOR.

13

Miss Thirza M. Grover.	58	49	.84	8	6	8	4	28
Miss Mary A. Grover.	55	45	.81	8	8	17	8	
Mr. A. Howard Staples.		52				28	4	28
Mr. Joseph H. Morse.		50	.70	6	8	28	7	15
7 Miss Sarah E. Hewitt.	20	14	.75	8	10	28	12	22
Miss E. Ellen Maxin.	38	17	.80	18	12	28	12	24
8 Miss Mary Royal.		30	.83	12	12	28	12	24
Mr. Alden E. Bossey.	130	24	.84	29	12	28	12	24
9 Miss Randolph E. H. Willard.		53	.77	9	12	28	12	24
Mr. Edward Eastman.	26	20	.89	9	12	28	12	24
Miss Ellen Hubbard.		40	.84	9	12	28	12	24
Miss Ellen Hubbard.	64	22	.81	30		28	12	24
10 Miss Mary L. Twitchell.		49	.73	13		28	9	15
Mr. B. W. Bryant.	36	14		8	13	28	13	26
11 Mr. Cyrus R. Lawrence.		35	.71			28	12	12
Mr. Asaph Jackson.	73	48	.62	9	6	28	8	14
12 Miss Adelina L. Abbott.		16	.71	5	10	28	12	22
Mr. S. P. Maxin.	13	10	.77	15	6	28	12	24
13 Mr. Oliver T. Tubbs.	17	24	.80	22	15	28	11	23
14 Miss Augusta Hale.	30	28	.87	22	15	28	11	23
15 Miss Edith Hammond.	51	18	.75	15	15	28	11	23
Mr. Asa Child.		31	.77	15	15	28	11	23
16 Miss Charlotte Chase.	24	31	.75	15	15	28	11	23
Mr. Seth Benson.	52	37	.75	15	15	28	11	23
17 Miss Mary T. Field.		31	.77	15	15	28	11	23
Mr. Charles H. Bolster.		31	.77	15	15	28	11	23
18 Miss H. Louise Jackson.		31	.77	15	15	28	11	23
Mr. Otis B. Rawson.		37	.75	15	15	28	11	23

Miss Thirza M. Grover.

Miss Mary A. Grover.

Mr. A. Howard Staples.

Mr. Joseph H. Morse.

7 Miss Sarah E. Hewitt.

Miss E. Ellen Maxin.

8 Miss Mary Royal.

Mr. Alden E. Bossey.

9 Miss Randolph E. H. Willard.

Mr. Edward Eastman.

Miss Ellen Hubbard.

Miss Ellen Hubbard.

10 Miss Mary L. Twitchell.

Mr. B. W. Bryant.

11 Mr. Cyrus R. Lawrence.

Mr. Asaph Jackson.

12 Miss Adelina L. Abbott.

Mr. S. P. Maxin.

13 Mr. Oliver T. Tubbs.

14 Miss Augusta Hale.

15 Miss Edith Hammond.

Mr. Asa Child.

16 Miss Charlotte Chase.

Mr. Seth Benson.

17 Miss Mary T. Field.

Mr. Charles H. Bolster.

18 Miss H. Louise Jackson.

Mr. Otis B. Rawson.

REPORT OF THE

TEACHERS.

Forty-one different teachers have been employed during the year. Thirteen were beginners. Twenty-six were residents of the town.

SCHOOL MONEY.

The amount of money raised for support of school,	\$1,323 80
State School Fund,	344 19
Interest appropriated,	250 00
Amount,	82,323 90
Amount per scholar,	2 23

TEXT BOOKS.

A greater uniformity of text books now prevails than we have had for some years. This is a good desideratum. The text books recommended by my predecessors and mainly adhered to by me, are of a grade and character that meet the wants of our schools, and receive the very general approval of the community. This book question is one that interests every citizen, as it comes home to the pocket sooner or later, and one that should interest every member of the community, for the progress of our schools depends very much on uniformity and suitability of text books. Yet it is the fire teacher that must give efficiency to any text book, however vaunted its merits. Sargent's Series, as a whole, I would not wish to see displaced, at least, till they fall somewhat behind the march of improvement, and become too old a story. Greenleaf's Arithmetics have long been familiar friends of the school room, yet they "discount on the improved method," cast interest sufficiently accurate to satisfy the most penurious money-lender, contain very fair "proportions," and are not wanting in "weight and measure." The Series are now complete, in themselves. Although some other one book may have superior arrangement to one of these, yet it would be bad policy to make such a change, (notwithstanding some of our deservedly popular teachers may express a desire to see it generally adopted in our Schools,) as no one doubts but there is a peculiar advantage in a graded series of text books, on the same subject, by the same author.

The following books are now adopted in this town.

GREENLEAF'S SERIES OF MATHEMATICS.

SARGENT'S SERIES OF READERS.

SARGENT'S SPELLERS.

HUOWN'S SERIES OF GRAMMARS.

PAYSON, DUNTON & SCHUBNER'S SYSTEM OF PENMANSHIP.

HANNABRO & PAYSON'S BOOK KEEPING.

WARREN'S PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY.

SCHOOL HOUSES.

As an important item in our educational machinery, the good school house deservedly ranks first. It stands a silent teacher, and inculcates its lessons by *example* rather than precept. Then let it be pleasantly located,—let it be neat, commodious, and somewhat attractive by its conformity to the laws of harmony in proportion. It need not be decorated by Doric columns, Ionic capitals, or patterned after the elaborately carved Corinthian style, for it is to be hoped that school house carrying has seen its palmiest days. Yet it may comply with the most generally observed laws of Architecture, and combine something of the *agreeable* with the useful, thus contributing to the moral refinement, as well as the comfort of its occupants. It has been well said, "If the building is an object of beauty, the very sight of it inspires emotions of pleasure; it adorns and beautifies the landscape of which it forms a part; it becomes an attractive place to children, and does not repel them, as now, by its deformity; it practically teaches ideas of proportion and symmetry, and now and excellent conceptions of beauty of form; it throws over properly the shield of beauty, and so checks and finally eradicates the rudeness which is stimulated to destructiveness by deformity; it forms one of those influences which have most power over the heart and affections, directly aiding the teacher in the most difficult and important part of his work." Well did General Jackson understand the significance of "The church yonder, and the school house beside it." These to his mind were the exponents of New England's morals and general intelligence. The school house stands the representative or exponent of education.

Although most of us confess to a liking to the landmarks of our early years, yet those "squared monuments" of pain, where our soles dangled in empty space, are not of that character that would induce us to make a long pilgrimage to do them reverence. Hopeful for the future is the fact that, one by one, are these old shanties transformed into respectability. Two are numbered among the things that were. The house in No. 10 has been removed from that "point nearest the heavens," enlarged, and entirely rejuvenated. It is now pleasantly located, commodious, and very creditable to the district.

The school house in No. 16 has been removed from that "horrible pit of miry clay," to a more desirable spot, where it is now provided with a woodshed, and other conveniences. Its interior has been entirely remodeled, rendering it as commodious as its limited walls will permit.

No. 1. This district is deserving of a better house, and I would most earnestly request the citizens to look to the dilapidated state of their so-called school house. This house is of ample dimensions, and of sufficient height, which is all that can be said in its behalf. There is rather a questionable propriety in reminding the children in such a house, of "the great advantages for getting an education," secured by the kindness of their parents.

No. 2. Here stands a relic of former days, venerated for nothing but its age. No wonder the parents in this district visit the school but rarely, where their children are cribbed and confined in distance vile. Here you may find "huc upon huc" variously illustrated with cuts. The whole may as aptly be termed food for mirth, as were Pulaski's ragged soldiers "food for powder."

The shanty in No. 3 is hardly deserving of notice, and this it is hoped is the last that it will ever get. The process of tearing down commenced some three months since, and the work has steadily progressed up to the present time. The labor thus far has been entirely gratuitous, and I doubt not from the signs of the times, it will be continued to the end. Arrangements are making to rebuild early the coming season. Let every citizen of the district see to it, that they have a house thoroughly and substantially built. Let it be a convenient and beautiful house, calculated to be attractive, as well as instructive for good, showing that a real importance is attached to education.

Respectfully submitted,

S. P. MAXIN, SUPERVISOR.

